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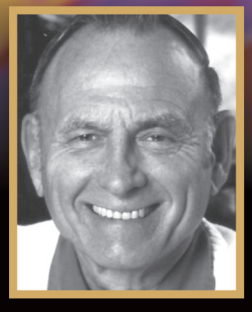

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by Joseph Roberts

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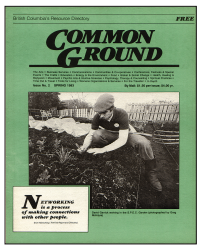

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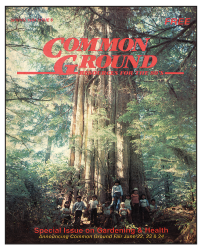

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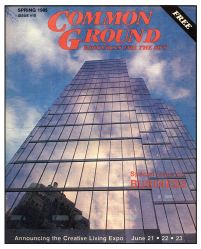

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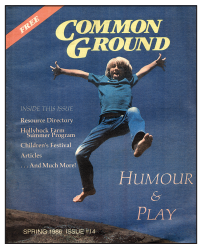

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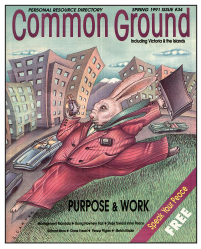

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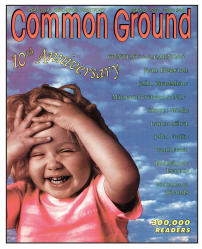

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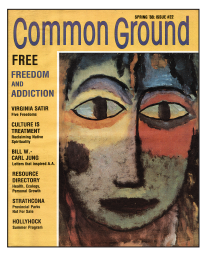

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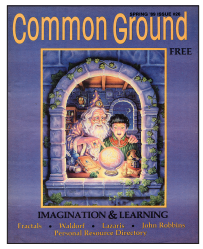

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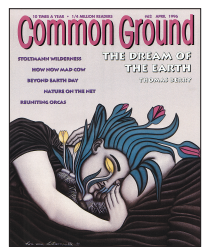

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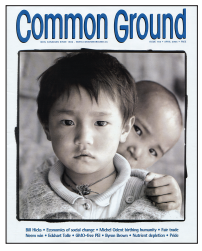

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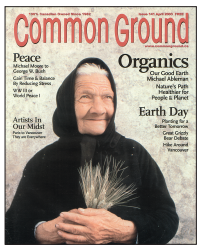

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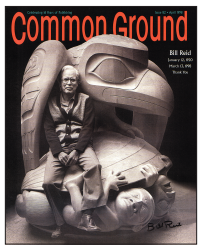

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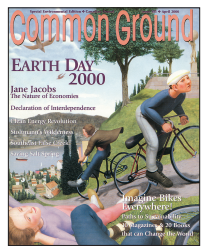

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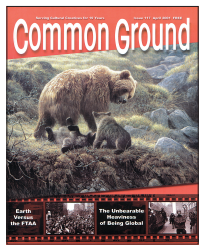

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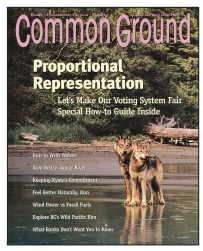

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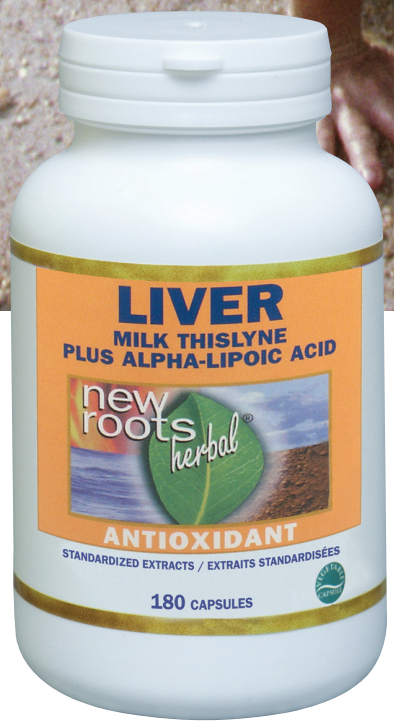

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Monopoly medicine prevents real healthcare

DRUG BUST *Alan Cassels*

It was 260 years ago this month (May 20, 1747, to be exact) that a British naval physician began what some have called the world's first clinical trial. At the time, the biggest scourge of the Royal Navy was not enemy cannon fire from the French or Spanish fleets, but scurvy, a disease that left sailors weak, bleeding and incapacitated, often killing them.

No one knew anything about vitamins then, and even less about vitamin deficiency. A 31-year-old naval surgeon, James Lind, hypothesized that foods high in acid content might help, so he tested 12 sailors suffering from scurvy and divided them into six pairs. In addition to their regular meals, he fed each pair different things, such as garlic, seawater, cider, vinegar, oranges and limes, and within a few weeks it was obvious which worked best: While the orange and lime pair regained their strength and went back to work, the others worsened. This discovery was of no small import; preventing scurvy contributed enormously to the massive strength of the British navy and Britannia would rule the waves for the next almost 200 years.

Lind's elegant, little nutrition experiment comes to mind when I ponder the debates in Canada over the sustainability of healthcare, the perennial discussions about how much healthcare we can afford and the public's concern around what is considered "legitimate" healthcare, worthy of public coverage.

Canadians now spend in excess of $20 billion per year on prescription drugs, an amount that is growing at a rate of about $1.5 billion per year. While some argue that this money is a good investment in healthcare, leading to longer and healthier lives, others say that our growing dependence on high-tech pharmaceuticals is leading us in the opposite direction where we get diminishing – and some would say negative – returns for all this new money.

Like human-induced climate change, there are a lot of inconvenient truths around the sustainability of publically-funded medical care. Sadly, the debate is mired in arguments around who should pay (public versus private), as opposed to what we should pay for. Those who have thought deeply about this issue have suggested "integrative solutions" to the current healthcare crises, where we start rethinking the contents of our publically-funded healthcare basket and make some hard choices about paying for effective care.

At the end of May, a conference at the University of Victoria may hold a key to cracking the nut of unsustainable health care. Sponsored by the Association of Complementary and Integrative Physicians of BC (ACIPBC), a group of physicians aiming to shape a healthcare system that draws from both worlds – orthodox medicine and "complementary and alternative" medicine – the Body Heals Conference (www.bodyheals.ca) brings together an array of luminaries in the fields of integrative care. No doubt the conference will, at the very least, provide some grist for the mill as the government continues its public "Conversation on Health" in BC.

Integrative medicine may well require a revolution in thinking. It requires that medical education be more open and accepting, and that a medical profession, even one absolutely sold on the drugs'n'surgery paradigm, understands how something as simple as vitamin therapy could help patients.

BC's expert in the field of integrative medicine is Dr. Warren Bell, a family physician from Salmon Arm who also happens to be the current president of the ACIPBC. For the past 27 years, Dr. Bell has been a keen observer of the relationship between the pharmaceutical industry and the medical profession and the field of therapeutics in general. He maintains that integrative healthcare chooses from the entire palette of effective options, some of which are orthodox – drugs and surgery – while others are complementary, such as massage therapy, nutrition therapy, naturopathy and herbal treatments.

Critiques of complementary or integrative medicine usually revolve around three main concepts: Evidence, respect and public funding. Many doctors and patients believe that "real" medicine is based on solid, scientific evidence, that it is respected and practised by the medical mainstream and that it is taught in medical school and paid for by public funds. These beliefs neglect to consider that a myriad of political decisions, along the way, determine which therapies are included in the basket and which aren't. Practitioners of integrative medicine, such as Dr. Bell, are aware of the political and economic issues that influence the basket's contents. They believe, as I think most of us do, that the value of a therapy should be judged on its therapeutic efficacy, not on politics. Let's look at the three arguments:

1) Integrative medicine is not evidence-based

In terms of "evidence," you won't find many 5,000-patient clinical studies of complementary medicine (unlike patented pharmaceuticals), but that doesn't mean these therapies aren't based on good research. Most medical knowledge is not derived from studies of thousands of patients, but physicians can still be guided by careful research, observation and well-controlled, but smaller, studies. How many patients did it take to prove the efficacy of lime juice to prevent and treat scurvy? Twelve. With many big drug studies, the effect sizes are so miniscule that the studies need thousands of patients to prove statistically-significant results. Many experts will tell you that complementary medicine is not evidence-based, but, as Dr. Bell notes, "Those who say that alternative medicine isn't based on good evidence have resolutely refused to look at the evidence."

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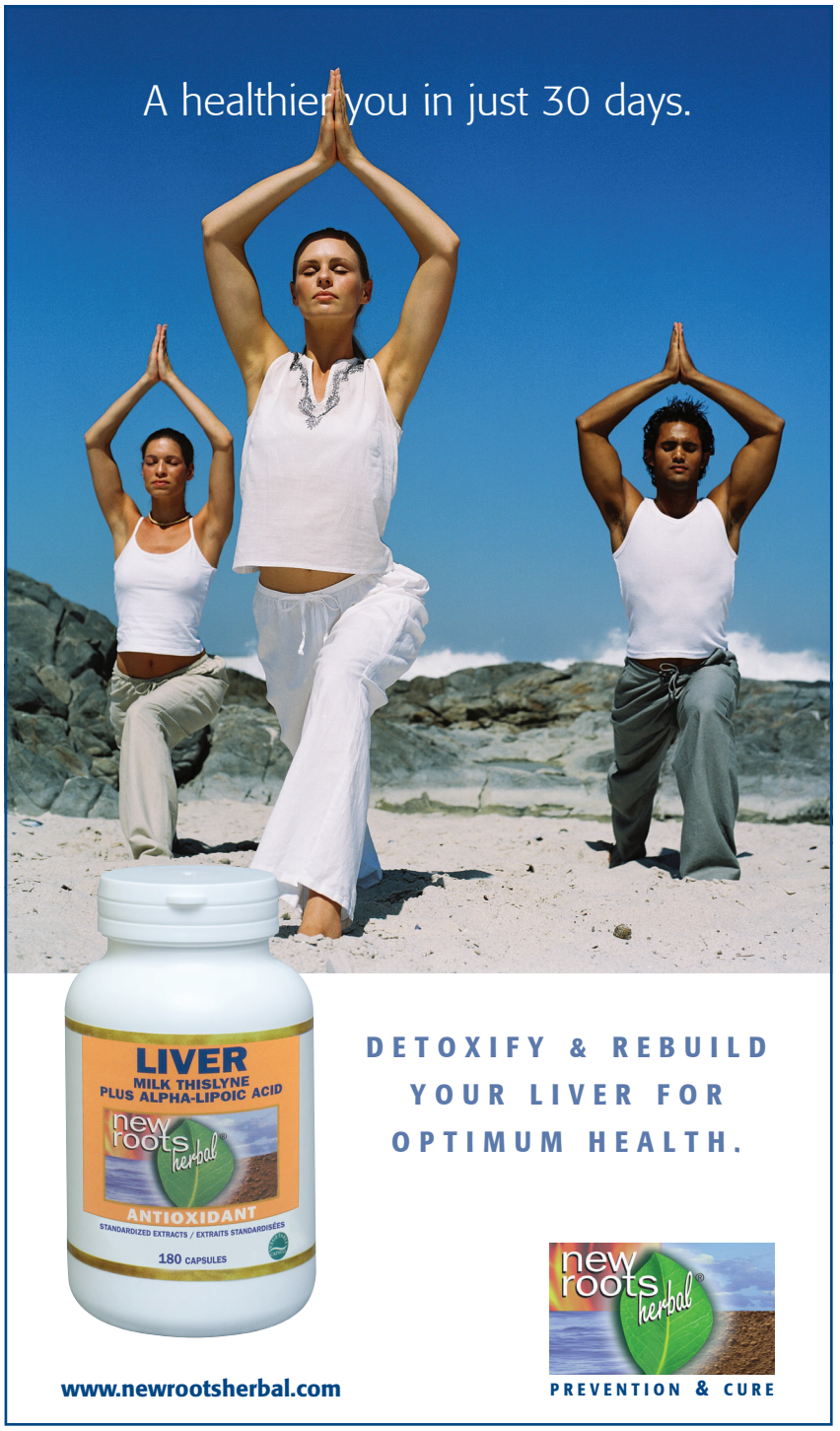


Try going milk-free

NUTRISPEAK *Vesanto Melina MS, RD*

In recent months, this column has touched on food choices and their impact on global warming. Since the release of the Food and Agriculture Organization's report, *Livestock's Long Shadow*, many of us are now choosing to be part of the solution. The FAO report confirmed that livestock, including dairy cattle, is a major contributor to today's serious environmental problems and that urgent action is required to remedy the situation. (See http://www.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2006/1000448/index.html)

One step we can take is to select non-dairy sources of dietary calcium. Fortunately, Health Canada is in tune with this problem-solving approach. For the first time, it has officially included milk alternatives in its most recent food guide, *Eating Well With Canada's Food Guide*, launched in February. The guide features fortified soymilk as a clear alternative to dairy and a great source of calcium, vitamin D and other nutrients. (See www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index_e.html)

Until now, the food guide has offered no alternatives to dairy products. No matter that roughly 70 percent of the world's population has some degree of difficulty digesting milk, including Canada's aboriginal people and large numbers of us who came to this country as immigrants. In fact, lactose intolerance is a perfectly normal condition. In humans, after about four years of age, the intestinal lactase enzyme that digests the sugar (lactose) in both cow and mother's milk diminishes. However, without the lactase enzyme, lactose remains undigested and results in abdominal distension, bloating and discomfort.

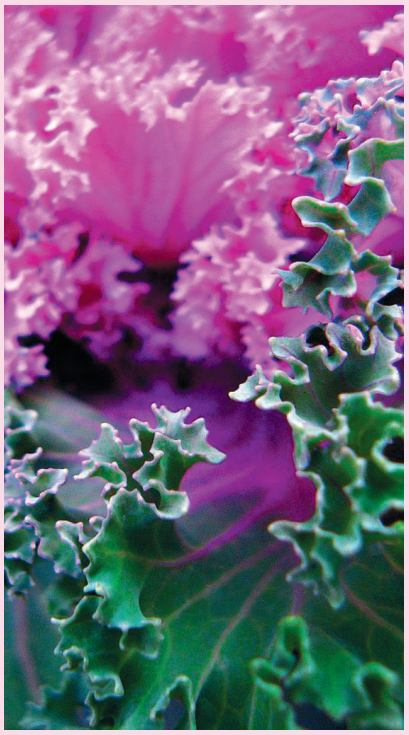
We do not require cow's milk; there are many alternative sources for the nutrients it contains. For more on this topic, see the books *Becoming Vegetarian*, *Becoming Vegan* and *Food Allergy Survival Guide*, which are available at libraries and bookstores or through www.nutrispeak.com. Also, try the recipes in *ExtraVeganZa*, a new book by Lauren Mattias of Victoria (www.phoenixfarm.ca/extraveganza).

Fortunately, more and more restaurants are featuring calcium-rich alternatives to dairy. Many coffee, tea and chai spots provide fortified soy milk, including the Dharma Kitchen and Chai, both on West Broadway in Vancouver, Wendel's in Fort Langley and at Starbucks locations in between.

Green veggies like kale, broccoli, bok choy, collards, napa cabbage (sui choy) and okra are well-known for being good sources of calcium. In fact, we absorb the calcium in these greens twice as efficiently as from dairy products. Load up on broccoli at The Foundation at 2301 Main Street. It's a fun spot for 20-somethings or if you just want to feel like you're still in your 20's. For an environment that nourishes the soul and food that satisfies the palate and eye, visit Radha Yoga and Eatery at 728 Main Street (www.radhavancouver.org).

Kale salad with orange ginger dressing

If you haven't known what to do with kale, here's a wonderful salad from Radha. This recipe supplies 166 mg of calcium per serving and the dressing is amazing. The calcium is provided by the kale (chopped matchstick thin), the other veggies, the tahini and the orange juice. You should be able to find any unfamiliar ingredients at natural food stores.



Dressing
1 cup orange juice (250 ml)
2 tbsp minced, fresh ginger (30 ml)
2 tsp sesame oil (optional) (10 ml)
2 tbsp sesame tahini (30 ml)
2 tbsp miso (30 ml)
2 tbsp cider vinegar (30 ml)
2 tbsp Bragg's or tamari (30 ml)
4 dates, pitted, soaked
cayenne or black pepper, to taste

Salad
1 bunch kale, de-stemmed and thinly sliced
1 cup thinly-sliced red cabbage (250 ml)
1 to 2 carrots, grated or julienned
½ cup daikon, julienned (125 ml)
½ red pepper, thinly sliced
¼ cup cilantro or parsley, chopped (59 ml)
¼ cup mint, chopped (59 ml)
dulse flakes (optional)
sesame seeds

In large mixing bowl, combine salad ingredients and toss well. Combine dressing ingredients in blender and process until smooth. Adjust seasoning. Add dressing to salad, to taste. Toss to combine. If possible, allow the dressed salad to sit for 20 minutes. Kale can also be marinated separately, up to one day ahead. Serves 4 to 6.

Vesanto Melina, is a registered dietitian in Langley BC and co-author of seven food and nutrition classics. She regularly consults for people who wish to improve their health or for those in dietary transition. www.nutrispeak.com, vesanto@nutrispeak.com, 604-882-6782.

ATTENTION ALL WOMEN!

Do you have any of the following symptoms?

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- **Anxiety**
- **Irritability**
- **Mood swings**
- **Insomnia**
- **"Foggy" thinking**
- **Heavy periods**
- **Breast tenderness**
- **Cyclic Headaches**
- **Fatigue**
- **Decreased Libido**
- **Weight gain (abdomen, hips, thighs)**

Alternative Hormone Solutions
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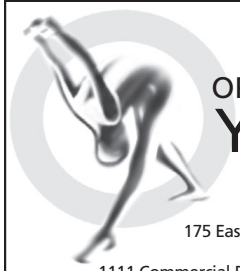

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Alarm bells beg action

EARTHFUTURE *Guy Dauncey*

When we stand on the edge of the present, looking out towards the future, the looming clouds and lightning strikes of imminent climate change make for a very ominous warning. There's no mistaking the need for alarm.

But being alarmed never got us anywhere, unless it was associated with action. When a fire alarm rings, we know what to do: Evacuate the building and apply water. But what happens when Earth's alarm bells ring? We can't evacuate the planet.

And here's what's so amazing. Within my soul, I carry a permanent vision of Earth as a shining paradise where war and poverty exist only in the history books, troubled humans have finally learned to work together and love is a deeply felt presence in everyone's heart.

I have never thought of this as a fantasy or daydream. I experience it as solid knowledge of what can be – what *will* be. For all my 40 adult years, ever since I emerged from the emotional isolation of British boarding schools, it has never left me. It is like a seed that lies inert in the desert, a deep, evolutionary potential awaiting the water that will allow it to burst forth and blossom. Some may think this a strange vision to hold in such troubled times, but I know I am not alone.

In practical terms, the vision finds expression in neighbourhoods filled with trees and greenery, backyards full of food, rooftops covered in solar panels and streets full of cyclists, pedestrians and roller-bladers. Electric buses quietly connect the distances, using the energy of wind, tide and deep geothermal rocks. People talk to each other and children play together in the open without a thought for TV. The whole community has become a school.

In this future world, global warming is a threat from the past, not the future. It still plays out its stormy games, but in a world that no longer burns fossil fuels or tears down forests, thereby having removed its primary causes. One day, in the far, distant future, our planet's climate will return to relative normal.

The threat from global climate change is so dire that there can be no solution *except* to extract our heads from our fossil-fuelled, competitive, consumer state of mind and step into this vision of a peaceful, sustainable future. The seeds of our planet's salvation lie dormant within our hearts and the water they need to blossom is all around us.

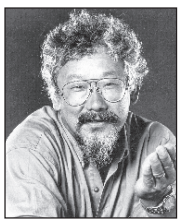
Wherever there is a garden, we could be growing fresh, wholesome organic food without the need for fossil-fuel-based chemicals and fertilizers, replacing food shipped up by plane or truck from California and Mexico. Wherever there is a family, there could be dinner parties with friends who are working together to step into a climate-friendly future. Wherever there is a building, whether it is a store, art gallery or factory, there could be a team of people working to find a way to heat it without oil or gas. Wherever there is a road, it could be full of pedestrians and cyclists. We will have to work to reclaim the space now allocated for fossil-fuelled trucks and cars. We will have to go to council to argue for carbon taxes, road tolls and long-distance bike trails, but when we work together, small victories encourage larger dreams.

We will have to go to council to argue for carbon taxes, road tolls and long-distance bike trails, but when we work together, small victories encourage larger dreams.

Wherever there are motorists – and whom among us isn't one? – there could be teams of people working to bring electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles to town. They could be calling the car manufacturers, placing advance orders and urging city councils to do likewise, as the city of Austin, Texas, has done with its $1 million commitment to help the first purchasers of plug-in hybrid cars and its North American project to collect advance orders for the cars. (See www.pluginpartners.org.)

Our planet's alarm bells are ringing and to answer them we must step forward and apply water to the fire. The vision will then blossom, the threat of climate change will diminish and we will discover the amazing inheritance that awaits us.

Guy Dauncey is author of Stormy Weather: 101 Solutions to Global Climate Change *(New Society Publishers), and president of the BC Sustainable Energy Association, www.bcsea.org.*



Virtual fixes don't work

SCIENCE MATTERS *David Suzuki*

ENVIRONMENT

Ever since the media finally decided that global warming is front-page material, politicians have been scrambling to come up with ways to placate an increasingly concerned public. Some of those ways are brave, forward-thinking and innovative. Some are complete bunk. Being able to tell them apart is critical to making an informed decision.

Of course, what I just said is a gross simplification of the various plans our leaders have come up with to address global warming. There is actually a pretty wide continuum of options out there, from having no plan at all to having the most aggressive plan on the planet. Global warming is a pretty complicated subject and there are a variety of ways to tackle the issue.

When it comes right down to it, the ultimate goal must be to truly reduce heat-trapping greenhouse gas emissions. That's the cause of the problem. If you don't actually reduce those emissions in absolute terms, the problem will keep getting worse and your plan won't be worth the paper on which it is printed.

And this is where the trouble begins. One type of plan – in theory, to reduce global warming – involves something called "intensity" targets. A smiling politician will often stand up and proudly proclaim new intensity-based greenhouse gas targets as the foundation of that government's plan to fight global warming.

Unfortunately, intensity-based targets will do no such thing. Greenhouse gas intensity refers to the amount of greenhouse gases produced per unit of economic activity (GDP, for example). You can likely see the problem with such a plan. If targets are tied to economic growth, actual greenhouse gas emissions can continue to rise, as long as they decrease relative to economic expansion.

Here's an example: Between 1990 and 2004, Canada's industries reduced their greenhouse gas emissions intensity by six percent. Fantastic! Based on this approach, we appear to be well on our way to solving the problem. Well, not so fast. Because the economy grew so much during that period, Canadian industries' actual emissions grew by 13 percent.

So even if intensity-based targets seem to call for a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, actual emissions could very well continue to rise. In fact, combined with policies that encourage economic growth, they most certainly will. And since the atmosphere does not respond to intensity, but rather to actual greenhouse emissions, such targets will do little, if anything, to fix the problem. They could actually end up putting us further and further behind.

Yet many politicians love intensity-based targets. That's because industries love them. It enables them to have their proverbial cake and eat it too. They appear to be reducing global warming pollution, while actually expanding and polluting even more. US President George W. Bush favours intensity targets, as did former Alberta premier Ralph Klein.

Canada's only current national plan to tackle global warming – the Clean Air Act – also uses intensity-based targets, up to at least 2020. That act, also called Bill C-30, recently underwent an all-party committee review. It was substantially revised and now includes real targets, which is a step in the right direction. Whether Canada proceeds with C-30 or another plan, it simply must have real and substantial targets if we hope to make any headway on global warming.

Global warming is a serious problem. Hardly a day goes by without another dire warning in the press about what it will mean if we don't seriously reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. Avoiding those dire predictions means actually reducing our emissions, not virtually reducing them, not sort of reducing them and not reducing their intensity. Any plan that uses intensity as a target should be taken back to the drawing board until we have something that will actually work.

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MAYDAY mayhem

by Geoff Olson

Who knows, perhaps that's what the twenty-first century has in store for us. The dismantling of the Big. Big bombs, big dams, big ideologies, big contradictions, big countries, big wars, big heroes, big mistakes. Perhaps it will be the Century of the Small. Perhaps right now, this very minute, there's a small god up in heaven readying herself for us. – Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things*

It's May. After months of cold, wet weather, the Earth's axis is tilting in your direction. Flowers are doing their botanical magic act, eating light and dispensing oxygen. All things that bloom, blossom and buzz are grooving to the jazzbo riff of springtime, that ancient tune of sun, sex and symbiosis. There's no better time to ponder the various meanings of May Day and its transformations through time.

In many pre-Christian pagan cultures, May 1st was reserved for rites honouring nature's fecundity. According to Wikipedia, "The earliest May Day celebrations appeared in pre-Christian Europe, as in the Celtic celebration of Beltane and the Walpurgis Night of the Germanic countries." *Encyclopaedia Britannica* traces May Day back to the old Roman Floralia, or festival of flowers: "Celebrations included a May king and queen, a Maypole and people carrying trees, green branches or garlands."

Across Europe, the Church grabbed up ancient pagan sites and dates, sending the old rites down the memory hole. With the Christianization of Europe, May Day became a denatured, springtime event, observed on school grounds and in churches. However, the fertility imagery appears to have flown under the radar of a few schoolmarms; in particular, the dance around a phallic maypole topped with streamers.

Yet echoes of the pre-Christian past still reverberate through today's holidays, particularly during Christmas and Easter. The latter derives from Anglo-Saxon fertility rites of the goddess Eostre or Ostara. The fabled Easter egg originated as a symbol for springtime germination, and the rabbit, with its penchant for reproduction, was an obvious choice for fertility. This solves the puzzle, at least partly, of what an egg-dispensing hare has to do with Christ's resurrection – a resurrection prefigured in Osiris, Tammuz and many other pre-Christian Gods.

Today, neo-pagans and Wiccans celebrate their own version of the original pagan holiday on May 1st.

May Day also has a more recent inflection as a labour-related holiday. In 1899, the International Socialist Congress designated the first of May as a global celebration of working people. To this day, International Workers' Day is celebrated in many nations throughout the world, with the notable exception of the US and Canada. While May 1st still represents the optimistic associations of working people's solidarity, it also carries the baggage of twentieth century totalitarianism. It remains an important official holiday not just in Europe, but in Communist countries such as the People's Republic of China, Cuba and the former Soviet Union.

With left-wing interests doing their thing with May 1st, it was only a matter of time before right-wing interests got their hands on it too. As Wikipedia notes, "It was the Nazis, not the social democratic parties of the Weimar Republic, who made May Day a holiday in Germany. Through this proclamation, the Nazis tried to take up the connotations of International Workers' Day, but did not permit socialist demonstrations on this day. Instead, they adapted it to fascist purposes." In 1933, one day after the May 1st festivities, "… the Nazis outlawed all free labour unions and other independent workers' organizations in Germany..." How's that for social programming, Karl Rove?

Official efforts to deconstruct May Day didn't stop there. In 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower proclaimed May 1st both as Loyalty Day and Law Day. Many years earlier, The US had instituted September 1st as its official Labour Day. These initiatives were attempts to disassociate activism from the radical left and it certainly seemed to have worked on Canadians. In Canada, Labour Day on September 1 is notable for being the last holiday before school opens.

It's been a long, strange trip for May Day. Considering how the date has been co-opted by interests left, right and religious, there must be something deeply scary about a day originally devoted to the generative power of nature.

This brings us to the third variation of the "May" and "day" combo: Mayday, the international radio distress signal. A Mayday situation is one in which an aircraft, vessel, vehicle or person is in danger and requires immediate assistance. The call is given three times in a row – "Mayday Mayday Mayday" – to ensure it is heard and understood under noisy conditions.

If the 24-hour news cycle is any indication, the entire planet appears to be in a Mayday situation, the only difference being that the sinking ship and the rescue vehicle are one and the same. A tough situation for any clever monkey, but evolution is a blind process, or so we're told. Today's geopolitical situation is only a few degrees of separation from the power politics found at Jane Goodall's Gombe reserve, except with more sophisticated threat displays, and business lunches instead of bananas.

There's nothing scarier than the starry-eyed do-gooder in flight from his or her own shadow. The greatest horrors in human history weren't initiated by selfish, greedy, violent people. They were committed by true believers who were convinced they had a gig redeeming humanity.

Our collective behaviour may not be hard-wired, but it's persistent. Scientists insist we're half-ape, and spiritual leaders insist we're half-angel. There may not be a contradiction here as much as a difference in focus. For empathy and cooperation are as much primate behaviours as aggressiveness and competition. Nature is ambiguous and Trickster-like. We carry the jungle's darker places within us; we also carry its areas of light.

Myth may be more helpful than anthropology here. There is a Hasidic parable about the "righteous ones" who toil unnoticed in their work of "tikkun olam," which is Hebrew for "repairing the world." According to the tradition, there are only 36 of them around at any given time. These 36 righteous ones perform acts of kindness, helping out the poor and the powerless, leaving as quietly as they arrive, with only their good deeds as evidence of their presence. Tradition holds that through the actions of these 36 people, God sustains the world from generation to generation.

As the righteous ones themselves are always unaware of their role, any one of us could be among these 36, and we each must act as if we were, for the fate of the world may depend on us. Conversely, we must treat every person we meet as if they are one of the 36, to strengthen them to carry on.

The actual number of righteous ones is up for debate. Is it really closer to 36 thousand, or 36 million? According to writer Jack Kornfield, when someone asked Gandhi why he continually sacrificed himself for India, he replied, "I do this for myself alone. When we serve others, we serve ourselves. The Upanishads call this 'God feeding God.'"

Gandhi's sentiment and the story of the 36 may sound like impossibly noble goals, but we'd do well to remember that myths and parables deal in different truths than the who-what-when-where of journalism. This isn't the stuff of the 24 hour news cycle. The quiet acts of altruism that knit the world together go mostly unreported.

In his essay, *The Optimism of Uncertainty,* historian Howard Zinn examines a historical "catalogue of huge surprises," like the fall of the Berlin Wall, evidenced when powerful interests have been routed by people power. Zinn finds reason for optimism, in spite of the apparent "… overwhelming power of those who have the guns and the money and who seem invincible in their determination to hold on to it."

Zinn argues that some things "… less measurable than bombs and dollars" have proven a powerful counterforce, over time: "moral fervour, determination, unity, organization, sacrifice, wit, ingenuity, courage, patience – whether by blacks in Alabama and South Africa, peasants in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Vietnam or workers and intellectuals in Poland, Hungary and the Soviet Union itself.

"If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something," he continues. "If we remember those times and places – and there are so many – where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act, and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction. And if we do act, in however small a way, we don't have to wait for some grand utopian future. The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live now as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvellous victory."

Yet it's vital to differentiate small, selfless acts from the ego gratification of faux-heroism. For there's nothing scarier than the starry-eyed do-gooder in flight from his or her own shadow. The greatest horrors in human history weren't initiated by selfish, greedy, violent people. They were committed by true believers who were convinced they had a gig

redeeming humanity.

The judges of the Inquisition acted in the belief they were saving human souls from the fires of Hell. Hitler's henchmen believed they were doing humanity – or the Aryan race, at least – a favour by executing Jews. Stalin's followers demonstrated how the joyous spirit of Soviet May Day celebrations could shade into the Mayday nightmare of the "Show Trials" and collective farms.

We are witnessing a similar horror now, as God-fearing believers in the "war on terror" rationalize all sorts of insanity and inhumanity, including torture, on the farcical proposition that democracy can be introduced anywhere in the world from the barrel of a gun.

Yet in spite of our post-monkey mania for false idols and quixotic quests, our drive to cooperate remains as strong as the drive to compete. This spirit still animates the worldwide labour celebrations of May Day – the belief that people can work together for a better future for all, by eliminating market extremes. Ideological extremes aside, that dream lives on. And if there was ever a time needing worker solidarity, it's now. In March, the computer outlet Circuit City announced the elimination of 3,400 jobs across the US to pursue the hiring of less-experienced, lower-paid staff. In their magnanimity, the company is offering the fired employees the opportunity to reapply after a 10-week interval – at minimum wage.

With outsourcing overseas, even journalism jobs are up for grabs. Over the past two years, the news agency *Reuters* has moved much of its operations from its Western base to Bangalore, India. *Reuters* is simply the most visible player in so-called "remote control" journalism. Last November, the *Herald Tribune* reported that the *Columbus Dispatch* in Ohio had "… announced its intentions to shed 90 graphic design jobs and ship out the work to Affinity Express [a production facility] in Pune, India.

There is a kind of mad, race-to-the-bottom logic at work here, as domestic pain and instability translates into shareholder return. Labourers everywhere lose in this game, eventually. Managers in India, and their employees, were understandably pleased when the first wave of white collar jobs arrived from North America in the nineties, only to be disappointed when corporations pulled up stakes a few years later, to access workers at lower wages in China. It's like a game of musical chairs, with another seat eliminated with each round.

Who will be the final ones working for peanuts? China's oppressed subjects in Tibet, perhaps? Australian aborigines? Rust Belt Americans? Genetically modified gorillas?

The attack on workers' rights in the US is especially ironic considering that a holiday embraced by anarchists, socialists and communists all over the world pays tribute to Americans who stood up to fight for their rights and freedom. Labour unrest, initiated in Chicago on May 1, 1886, led to the Haymarket Riot three days later, inspiring the creation of International Workers' Day, a day celebrated across the world, but not in the US or Canada.

If springtime is all about rebirth and resurrection, perhaps it's time we dusted off a much-maligned holiday and upgraded it to May Day 2.0. The bounty from labour and capital is ultimately drawn from the harvest, so why not merge the worker and nature angles? They're a natural fit. We'd still keep Earth Day, but it would be a preliminary event leading up to the planetary celebration on May 1st, when we'd celebrate not just the Earth, but all beings that struggle on it – from the threatened creatures of the coral reefs to the disappearing tigers of Southeast Asia to the sweatshop workers of "free trade zones" to the native survivors of Canadian residential schools to endangered white collar workers.

May Day 2.0 will be about all creatures that creep, crawl, fly, swim, slither, stride or strut. But not for any that goose step.

"Cultured people are merely the glittering scum which floats upon the deep river of production," said Winston Churchill. The glittering scum will be welcome at May 1st celebrations, along with sensibly-partying proles. Policy wonks will give stirring speeches, reminding audiences that economy is built on ecology. Labour activists will tell us that corporatism fails as surely as central planning, and that mixed economies allow the best expression of human skills and talents.

Anthropologists will argue that life, which feeds off life, does indeed have a cannibalistic quality, but that it doesn't necessarily doom us to a predatory-prey relationship with our own kind. Population experts will talk about the need to limit our numbers. The animal rights activists will weigh in on behalf of the furred and feathered, and argue for the small, ecological footprint of vegetarian diets.

There will be trading and bartering on May Day 2.0, but no cash or credit. This inclusive day, as I imagine it, will welcome all faiths, all schools of thought and all political stripes. The words of the 13th century Afghan poet Rumi will decorate signs around city parks: "Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field. I'll meet you there."

And everyone will meet there. Tibetan lamas will speak on the duty to liberate all beings from suffering. Hebrew mystics will explain the Cabbalah. Muslim clerics will note how the Koran honours the prophets of Judaism and Christianity. The liberation theology crowd will emphasize Christ's love for the sinners and the poor. Needless to say, the seminars and shmoozing won't put a crimp on the pagans' maypole dancing and meaddrinking. Catching the buzz, Hindus will be chanting, Sufi dervishes twirling, Taoists flowing and Buddhists ommmmming. Rastafarians will be sucking on spliffs the size of rolled-up newspaper flyers. And because some things are eternal, Irish Catholics and Protestants will still be arguing, but they'll only have access to water pistols and face paint.

There will be music playing at May Day venues all across the world, from gospel to Zydeco to speed metal. Believers and unbelievers alike will be dancing their butts off, like holy fools. Even the unfunkiest of Quakers will bust a move, joining the atheists in a stiff-limbed jig.

On May Day 2.0, we'll officially recognize that one of the best things we got from our primate past is our sense of rhythm. We'll understand the need to keep time with the natural cycles of the planet, not the quarterly reports of conglomerates. Through musical solidarity, we'll celebrate what connects us all, that luminous something that still shines through the cracks in this broken world. And for at least one day of the year, we'll not just hope for it to be true, but feel it to be real.

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by Geoff Olsen

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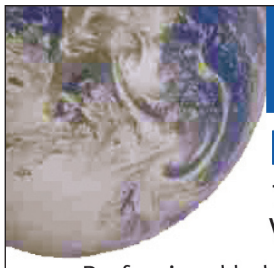

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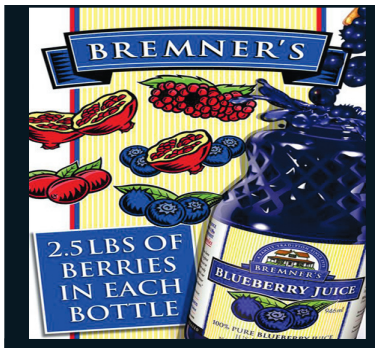

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Ecology of make believe

In his most recent book, Endgame: The Problem of Civilization*, which earned him the Press Action Person of the Year award in 2006, deep-ecology author Derrick Jensen compares western civilization to an abusive family, where violence is a constant threat and the victims feel helpless and dependent on the abuser. He urges his readers to bring down this culture by any means necessary. His ideas are controversial and Jensen confesses he gets hate mail from pacifists. Activist Zoe Blunt spoke with Jensen by phone from his home in Crescent City, California.*

Zoe Blunt: Your book *Endgame* has been getting a lot of attention. You write that "… civilization and the civilized continue to create a world of wounds."

Derrick Jensen: Yeah, where do you want to start? Ninety percent of the large fish in the oceans are gone. The passenger pigeons are gone. The great auks are gone. There's dioxin in mothers' breast milk. Indigenous people have been dispossessed, had their land stolen and forced to enter this economy, forced to enter this system. People all around the world have been enslaved. So, what wounds would you like to talk about?

Mary Daly said there's only one religion in the world, which is patriarchy. Robin Morgan wrote about something she calls "the democracy of fear," which is that everywhere in the world, any woman could be walking alone at night and if she hears footsteps behind her she has reason to be afraid. So there's a huge wound right there.

We could talk about the wage economy. We could talk about the fact that there are more slaves on the planet right now than came across on the Middle Passage, using a tight definition of slavery. That's not even including wage slaves or anything else.

ZB: You've been getting a lot of response to your book, and not all of it positive. Why is it so difficult for some people to contemplate the end of civilization?

DJ: I think that one of the reasons is we identify more closely with being civilized beings than we do with being animals that need habitat. Another way to talk about that is if your experience is that your food comes from the grocery store and your water comes from the tap, you'll defend to the death the system that brings those to you because your life depends on it. If, on the other hand, your food comes from a landbase and your water comes from a river, then you'll defend to the death that landbase and that river, because your life depends on them.

Like any good abusive system, this system has made us dependent upon it. And another important thing about the whole question of abuse is that one of the things that happens within any abusive dynamic, and that's true whether we're talking about an abusive family or an abusive culture, is that everything – and I mean *everything* – in this dynamic is set up to protect the abuser. And so every member of an abusive family comes to identify more closely with the abuser's feelings than they do their own.

If you look at all the "solutions" proposed for global warming – anywhere, all of them – what do they take as a given? They take as a given industrial capitalism. That's the baseline. The baseline is not the real world, the physical world, which must be the baseline for all of our decisions because without a world we don't have anything.

Most of the complaints about *Endgame*, and most of the hate mail I've gotten about *Endgame*, frankly, have not come from people who think that civilization will go on forever. Most of it's come from pacifists and lifestyle activists, and one of the jokes I've started making is that I should write a version of *Endgame* called "Endgame for Pacifists," which would be a thousand blank pages with one in the middle that says "sometimes it's okay to fight back." Because it's the only thing they're hearing in the entire book, or the only thing they're reading in the entire book. All the other analysis goes by the wayside. They see that, it triggers them, and they can't think about anything. And I've gotten a lot of hate mail from both pacifists and also from lifestyle activists who get very upset when I suggest they have to do more than just live simply.

ZB: You've written about hope in regard to reforming civilization, and you said hope is harmful.

DJ: I don't want to reform civilization, by the way.

ZB: No. So you're saying hope is harmful, when it comes to our goals.

DJ: Okay, let's back up a second. What are our goals? What are *your* goals? What do you want?

ZB: You've talked about – and I agree with this – a world where every year there are more salmon, where there is more old-growth forest, where there are more spotted owls, for example. We're about to lose the last of our spotted owls in Canada. If we want to stop that, what do we do?

DJ: Okay, that's great. The first thing we have to do is figure out what we want. And the next thing we have to do, I think, is figure out what it takes for those creatures to survive. And it's pretty fundamental. I mean, what they need is habitat. Okay, end of conversation, talk to you later!

What do salmon need? They need for dams to be removed. They need for industrial logging to stop. They need for industrial fishing to stop. I'm not saying they need for fishing to stop; they need for industrial fishing to stop. They need for industrial agriculture to stop, because of runoff. They need for global warming to stop, which means they need for the industrial economy to stop. They need for the oceans not to be murdered. And each of those is pretty straightforward.

The problem is that so often, when people say, "What will it take for salmon to survive?" what they mean is, "What will it take for salmon to survive, given that we're not going to remove dams, we're not going to stop industrial logging, we're not going to stop industrial fishing?" It's the same. What do spotted owls need to survive, given that we're going to allow all of their habitat to be clearcut?

It's like, once again, what is primary and what is secondary? And what's always considered primary is this culture and this culture's exploitation.

And now, at long last, to your question of hope. There's false hope. I think it needs to be eradicated. False hope is one of the things that binds us to unliveable situations. That's one of the reasons why, like I mentioned earlier, that at every step of the way it was in the Jews' rational best interest to not resist [the Nazis]. There's a false hope that if they just go along, they won't get killed. And my mother – one of the reasons she

If you look at all the "solutions" proposed for global warming – anywhere, all of them – what do they take as a given? They take as a given industrial capitalism. That's the baseline. The baseline is not the real world, the physical world, which must be the baseline for all of our decisions because without a world we don't have anything.

stayed with my father is because of the false hope that he would change.

And what are the false hopes that bind us to this system? I mean, does anyone really think that Mac-Blo is going to stop deforesting because we ask nicely? Does anyone think that Monsanto is going to stop Monsanto-ing because we ask nicely? Oh, if we could just get a Democrat in the White House, things would be okay!

I was bashing hope at a talk I did a couple years ago and someone in the audience interrupted to shout out, "What is your definition of hope?" I didn't have one, so I asked them to define it. And the definition they came up with was that hope is a longing for a future condition over which you have no agency.

But I'm not interested in hope. I'm interested in agency. I'm interested in us finding what we love and figuring out what it will take to defend our beloved, and doing it.

ZB: You will be giving a talk in Vancouver entitled "Taking Action in a Culture of Violence." Tell us what you will speak about.

DJ: Well, what I will talk about primarily is a question: "Do you believe this culture will undergo a voluntary transformation to a sane and sustainable way of living?" I ask that question to people all over the country and no one ever says "Yes." And if you don't believe that this culture will undergo a voluntary transformation to a sane and sustainable way of living, what does that mean for our strategies and for our tactics? The answer is, "We don't know" and the reason we don't know is because we don't talk about it, and the reason we don't talk about it is because we're all so busy pretending that we have hope.

ZB: Do you have any new books in the works?

DJ: Oh, my gosh. Okay, so *Endgame* came out about a year ago. I've got another book coming out which is an anti-zoo book [May publication date]. It's written with Karen Tweedy Holmes, the photographer, and that's coming out through No Voice Unheard. Then I have a book coming out next January from Seven Stories [Press], called *As the World Burns: Fifty Simple Things You Can Do to Stay in Denial*. That's a graphic novel done with Stephanie McMillan, who does the wonderful cartoon *Minimum Security*.

And right now I'm writing a book about shit – whoops, I'm writing a book about feces, and how this culture has taken something that used to be a tremendous gift to the landbase and turned it into something poisonous. And how, in a sustainable culture, all of the products are helpful to the land. There's no such thing as waste. And how, when I defecate, somebody else – slugs or flies or the soil itself – eats it. And this culture produces wastes that are not useful, but in fact harmful.

ZB: That's a lot of work that's going to be coming in the future.

DJ: Yeah. You know, I'm actually thinking that I'm really tired. And it's not just because I've been touring so much. I think I might take a couple months off this summer. Because for one, I've been really sick the last couple of years. And also, I've written 13 books, I think, in the last six years. I remember I was thinking, "When I finish *Endgame*, I'm going to take a break." I finished it in November of whatever year that was, and then in December I wrote that anti-zoo book, and then the next year I wrote those two novels. And it just goes on. I haven't taken a break in years. And you know, I go back and forth because things are so, so desperate. And I just – I can't stop. There's a couple reasons I can't stop. One is because things are so desperate and they're getting worse every day. And another reason is because I'm so in love. I'm in love with [the land] and that's what you do. If you love someone and they're being hurt, they're being killed, you do what you can. You don't rest.

And then, also, I'm very aware of my own mortality. I don't want to die with eight books still in me. You know? I don't want to die and look back at the very last second and say, "I wish I could've done more. I wish I could've done this much more to help the salmon. I wish I could've done this much more to help the redwood trees."

When I die, I want to be spent. I want to feel like, you know, there's some days when you work really, really hard, and then you go to sleep and you are so, so ready to go to sleep? That's how I want to die. It's like, you know what? I'm done. There's nothing else I can do.

Derrick Jensen presented his talk at Langara College on April 18. He is the author of 12 books, including: Endgame: Volume 1: The Problem of Civilization; Endgame: Volume 2: Resistance; Walking on Water: Reading Writing and Revolution; The Culture of Make Believe; A Language Older than Words; Listening to the Land: Conversations about Nature, Culture, and Eros; Strangely Like War: The Global Assault on Forests; Welcome to the Machine: Science, Surveillance, and the Culture of Control. *For more information visit www.derrickjensen.org.*

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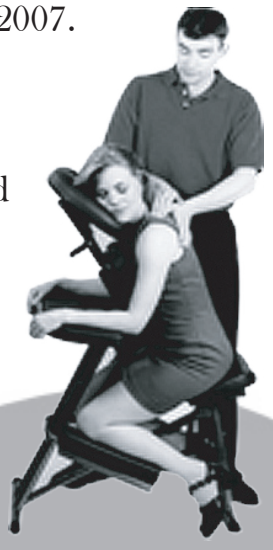

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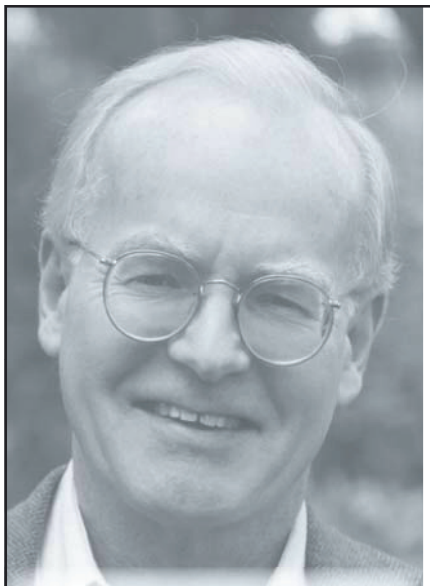

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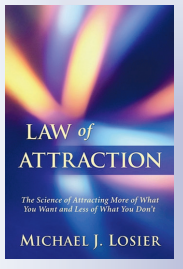

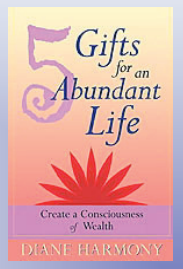

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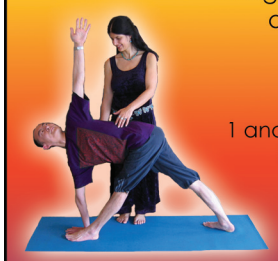

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THE POWER OF NOW *Eckhart Tolle*

Don't get attached to any one word. You can substitute "Christ" for presence, if that is more meaningful to you. Christ is your God-essence or the "Self," as it is sometimes called in the East.

The only difference between Christ and presence is that Christ refers to your in-dwelling divinity, regardless of whether you are conscious of it or not, whereas presence means your awakened divinity or God-essence.

Many misunderstandings and false beliefs about Christ will clear if you realize that there is no past or future in Christ. To say that Christ was or will be is a contradiction in terms. Jesus was. He was a man who lived two thousand years ago and realized divine presence, his true nature. And so he said, "Before Abraham was, I am." He did not say, "I already existed before Abraham was born." That would have meant that he was still within the dimension of time and form. The words "I am," used in a sentence that begins in the past tense, indicate a radical shift, a discontinuity in the temporal dimension. It is a Zen-like statement of great profundity.

Jesus attempted to convey directly – not through discursive thought – the meaning of presence, of self-realization. He had gone beyond the consciousness dimension, governed by time, into the realm of the timeless. The dimension of eternity had come into this world. Eternity, of course, does not mean endless time, but rather no time.

Thus, the man Jesus became Christ, a vehicle for pure consciousness. And what is God's self-definition in the Bible? Did God say, "I have always been and I always will be?" Of course not. That would have made the past and future a reality. God said, "I am that I am." No time here, just presence.

The "Second Coming" of Christ is a transformation of human consciousness, a shift from time to presence, from thinking to pure consciousness – not the arrival of some man or woman. If Christ were to return tomorrow in some externalized form, what could he or she possibly say to you other than "I am the Truth… I am divine presence. I am eternal life. I am within you. I am here. I am Now?"

Never personalize Christ. Avatars, divine mothers and enlightened masters – the very few that are real – are not special as persons. Without a false self to uphold, defend and feed, they are simpler and more ordinary than an ordinary man or woman. Anyone with a strong ego would regard them as insignificant or more likely not see them at all.

If you are drawn to an enlightened teacher, it is because there is already enough presence in you to recognize presence in another. There were many people who did not recognize Jesus or the Buddha, as there are, and always have been, many people who are drawn to false teachers.

Egos are drawn to bigger egos. Darkness cannot recognize light. Only light can recognize light. So don't believe that the light is outside you or that it can only come through one particular form.

The "Second Coming" of Christ is a transformation of human consciousness, a shift from time to presence, from thinking to pure consciousness – not the arrival of some man or woman.

If Christ were to return tomorrow in some externalized form, what could he or she possibly say to you other than "I am the Truth… I am divine presence. I am eternal life. I am If only your master is an incarnation of God, then who are you? Any kind of exclusivity is identification with form and identification with form means ego, no matter how well disguised.

Group work can also be helpful for intensifying the light of your presence. A group of people coming together in a state of presence generates a collective energy field of great intensity. It not only raises the degree of presence of each member of the group, but also helps to free the collective human consciousness from its current state of mind dominance.

However, unless at least one member of the group can hold the energy frequency of that state, the egoic mind can easily reassert itself and sabotage the group's endeavours.

Although group work is invaluable, it is not enough and you must not come to depend on it. Nor must you depend on a teacher or a master, except during the transitional period, when you are learning the meaning and practice of presence.

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Trust your body

UNIVERSE WITHIN *Gwen Randall-Young*

SPIRITUALITY

Healing takes courage and we all have courage, even if we have to dig a little to find it. – Tori Amos

I have always believed the body has an amazing ability to heal itself. It is designed to bring itself back into balance and fight off external threats. If we do not maintain it properly, these facilities may become compromised.

Another factor that affects our capacity for self-healing is the power our culture has ascribed to the medical profession. Long before there were "doctors," as we know them, tribal people had a sense of what was wrong when someone was ill. Drawing upon their own intuition and the wisdom of the group, they were adept at knowing which natural remedies could help.

Many people have either tuned out, or were never tuned in to begin with, to their own intuitive connection with their bodies. If something goes wrong, a person's first instinct often leads them to consult a doctor to see what she has to say. They then typically assume the doctor is correct and follow the advice given. Fortunately, the doctor is often right and the advice is sound. But far too often, the doctor cannot be certain, and healing is a matter of trial and error. Too many people end up taking medications they do not really need, and sometimes, that, alone, creates additional problems.

Regardless of whether a doctor's diagnosis is right or wrong, there is still the problem of our having abdicated our role in our own healing. This is counterproductive and even dangerous, particularly if we have a serious illness. We need to feel a sense of power over our illness and to have the ability to use our body and mind to make ourselves better.

It is natural to fear illness and to feel vulnerable when we are sick. This is particularly true if we have received a disturbing diagnosis. I am reminded of what Dr. Bernie Siegel wrote in his book, *Love, Medicine and Miracles*, "You can give me a diagnosis, but *not* a prognosis." In other words, you can tell me what I have, but you cannot tell me how long I have to live or how far my healing will progress.

The body/mind system is intricately connected and very complex. Much research has been done into how our thoughts, and the prayers or healing thoughts of others on our behalf, can affect our healing. If we think the worst and assume we will not get better, it has a profound effect on all of our inner healing systems. Keep thinking those thoughts and they become a self-fulfilling prophecy. If the mind thinks that not getting better is a foregone conclusion and that nothing will help, soon enough, the body just gives up.

If, instead, we empower ourselves by believing the body is designed to heal itself, and feel a strong sense of our own power to heal, our immune system grows stronger, we have a more positive outlook and we are more likely to try many things to help ourselves.

Dr. Siegel notes that the people most likely to recover from an illness are those who try as many different things as possible to support their healing. The options may include traditional medicine, alternative therapies, support groups, dietary changes, vitamins, visualization, hypnosis, prayer and a multitude of other strategies. Even if a doctor does provide a negative prognosis, she will never say there is a 100 percent chance you will not recover. Even if it were 90 percent, it is still better to visualize yourself among the 10 percent who are likely to get well, and then do everything you can to support that belief.

Remember; whatever the diagnosis, there are *always* individuals who beat the odds. Strive to be one of them.

Gwen Randall-Young is a psychotherapist in private practice and the author of Growing Into Soul: The Next Step in Human Evolution. *For articles and information about her books and personal growth/hypnosis CDs, visit www.gwen.ca. See display ad this issue.*

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Animals on film

FILMS WORTH WATCHING *Robert Alstead*

It is only in recent years that mainstream programs about nature and wilderness have begun to inform viewers that all is not well in the animal kingdom. Habitat destruction and species extinction have been played down in nature programs and films about animal welfare have been forced underground. Broadcasters have defended this self-censorship with the rationale that no one wants to watch depressing images about how humans are wrecking the planet and that it is better to enhance appreciation for wildlife through positive images. Perhaps. But would *March of the Penguins* have been any less successful at the box office if it had pointed out that global warming threatens to make the Emperor penguins' epic journey across the frozen wasteland of Antarctica even more hazardous? As *An Inconvenient Truth* has unequivocally shown, audiences want the hard truth about the state of their world. Cozy images of wilderness idylls just don't cut it anymore.

As *An Inconvenient Truth* has unequivocally shown, audiences want the hard truth about the state of their world. Cozy images of wilderness idylls just don't cut it anymore.

The *Animal Voices Film Festival* tackles man's relationship with animals head-on. In a series of documentaries of an hour or less, the fest looks at issues around activism, veganism and vegetarianism, animal testing and industrial farming practices. (The film festival runs at Vancity Theatre, June 2-3, noon to 9 PM. Tickets $5/day. See www.animalvoices.org/filmfest.)

One film likely to spark fierce debate is *Direct Action and the Politics of Nature*. The 38-minute film comprises an interview with controversial animal rights activist Dr. Steven Best, an associate professor of humanities and philosophy at the University of Texas. Best refers to the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) – known for their paramilitary activities – as "freedom fighters," engaged in America's "new civil war."

Best insists, during his 2003 presentation that, while "… the gloves are coming off," this radical language comes from a compassionate world view. "You are belittled for having compassion, that compassion is seen as something abnormal," he says. "The greatest perversion, the worst doublespeak ever created yet, is to call people who fight for the earth and for the animals, for them to be called terrorists, when the real terrorists are the people who are raping the planet and destroying millions of lives."

Photo source:
www.animalliberationfront.com

While this low-budget production by Rattle the Cage Productions offers good insight into the thinking of radical animal rights activists, to elevate it to something above pure propaganda, it cries out for a counterpoint to Best's controversial assertions.

The second of the two of the films I previewed is *Nature Chimpanzees: An Unnatural History.* The film deals with the subject of rehabilitating chimpanzees used in lab experiments, to test HIV, for example, and in the entertainment industry. They are typically incarcerated afterward, usually because they have become too big to handle.

It's sad to see the psychological and physical damage inflicted on these clearly-intelligent and emotional animals, especially given that we *Homo sapiens* have so much in common with them. But this is ultimately an encouraging film, showing how a few passionate individuals are managing to relieve the suffering of these creatures by removing them from their lonely prisons and introducing them to fellow humanized chimps and finding them homes in outdoor parks.

Civic Duty, billed as a psychological thriller in the vein of Alfred Hitchcock's classic *Rear Window*, is set during the paranoid climate of post-September 11. Instead of Jimmy Stewart's character convalescing with a broken leg and his camera, however, this film features a laid-off and emotionally unstable accountant (Peter Krause) who, after spying on his new neighbour, becomes convinced he is a terrorist.

With its stylish editing and use of media images, the film initially promises to offer a stimulating critique of the US's response to the terrorist attacks. Unfortunately, compared to Hitchcock's teasing ambivalences about characters and their motives, this film has all the subtlety of a bull in a china shop. Once it's clear in which direction we're headed, the tension fizzles and it descends into melodrama. The ending is laughable and the film, as a whole, feels like a missed opportunity. You also have to keep reminding yourself that those familiar Vancouver locations are actually meant to be *somewhere* in the States.

In a different league is Sarah Polley's *Away From Her* (out on May 4), a poignant tale about a couple married for 50 years coming to terms with the onset of Alzheimer's disease. The film, which stars Julie Christie and Gordon Pinsent in the lead roles, has been lavished with praise – impressive given that Polley is still in her late twenties and this is her directorial debut.

Robert Alstead recently completed the 80-minute documentary You Never Bike *Alone. For screening info and the DVD, visit www.youneverbikealone.com.*

Flowers grow in dirt

TWENTY SOMETHING *Ishi Dinim*

One thing that has occurred to me during my recent ponderings is that all relationships are like gardens. Each one requires a different kind of care and varying degrees of attention. Some like a lot of water or rough ground or more time, depending upon the season. Certain ones need constant work and others you can come back to anytime and they've taken care of themselves.

Then there are our own gardens. How do I relate to myself what I have done for my own plot? Parts of it are overgrown, others well-kept with strong roots and they're mysterious parts I discover constantly. I've neglected this piece recently and spring is upon us with so much potential for growth; I just have to choose what I want in it and what I don't.

It isn't often that true reflection takes place in my busy, over-stimulated life. There are innumerable places to place my attention; rarely is my focus on doing the work or play that is necessary. The man in the mirror seems aged and then a child, all at once. I've been spending a lot of time these days thinking about my place in the world. Time passes and I see multiple stories of my life flash before me: my dreams and fantasies are like seeds. Some I have planted and others I hold onto. Having the patience and knowing how to germinate them properly is a continual learning process and I'm always finding new tricks. This will be a season to cultivate health and creativity and weed out self-loathing and apathy.

Where and what do I want to be? Agrarian or urban? Well, maybe somewhere in between? I'm going to stake out a few rows of exercise, art production and simpler living. They can replace the unwanted brambles of lethargy, being entertained and decadence, although those brambles sure made nice berries. It is entirely up to me to become more aware of what each garden needs to grow and it'll be vital not to forget my own plot in the course of growing healthier relationships. If I ever figure out an outstanding method for making relationships or gardens work really well, I'll make sure to pass it on. However, in the meantime, all I can suggest is a little bit of patience, a whole lot of love and nature will do the rest.

Important links:
www.derrickjensen.org
www.saltspringseeds.com

Quotes:
We don't need a philosopher to tell us that life feeds off life. It only takes a quick walk outside or even a walk to the refrigerator. This failure or refusal or even inability to acknowledge the necessity of killing is a luxury born of our separation from life. It's a cliché by now to note that many of the civilized believe food comes from the grocery store, not from the flesh of living breathing plants and animals. – Derrick Jensen

Ishi graduated from Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design in 2001, with a BFA major in photography. He makes films, collects cacti and ponders many things. Currently, he is trying to figure out what to do with the rest his life. contactishi@yahoo.ca

Waiting to hear echoes back.

Original wisdom

by Joseph Chilton Pearce

Man's perceptions are not bounded by organs of perception; he perceives more than sense (tho' ever so acute) can discover. – William Blake, *There Is No Natural Religion*

The fact that our human brain was added to the kind of brain structures found in all mammals and that our mammalian brain overlays a reptilian brain gives some validity to the process of studying animals to get some idea of what makes humans tick. To a point, animals can tell us what bearing these older brain structures have in our own system. Intuition, for instance, which might be thought of as a faculty of very high intelligence, is actually found throughout the animal kingdom.

More than 50 years ago, I came across an account from a naturalist concerning intuition in wild animals. His most vivid story was of his daily observations on the progress of a mother fox and her cubs, secure in a deep den several feet up the bank of a rushing mountain stream. The kits were finally beginning to appear for short stretches when mama fox would bring mice and moles to them. One balmy, clear day, when a high breeze was blowing, that mother fox did something the naturalist had never seen before and that briefly baffled him: The vixen suddenly emerged from her den, scrambled some 15 feet up the bank, well above her home, and, with dirt flying, began furiously to dig another den. In a short time, she had disappeared into the new hole, still digging away, and finally, reappearing, she ran down to the original den and laboriously carried each little kit to their new home, where she safely deposited them.

Within minutes after completing this unusual feat, a flash flood tore down the steep mountain valley, creating a wall of water that carried masses of debris. The former den flooded and remained submerged for quite some time until the jammed water subsided. It seems a massive cloudburst had loosed several miles upstream, unbeknownst to the naturalist on that balmy day, but not to the vixen.

Following the great Asian tsunami of 2004, caretakers of several of the wild animal reservations in the island countries of Sri Lanka, Malaysia and the rest of the area reported that some 10 minutes before the great wave struck, the animals in their reserve all stampeded away from the shore and to the highest ground. A similar account concerned a group of elephants kept by a luxury tourist hotel on a Malaysian beach and trained to carry visitors on a sight-seeing tour through the jungle and along the shore. The beasts were secured near the hotel, each with one leg tethered by a chain linked to a post driven deep in the ground, not so much to keep them from wandering but to reassure the tourists who clustered around to feed them and gawk. Several minutes before the tsunami struck, the elephant that was then on his trek and near the beach suddenly turned and rushed back to the tethered group, trumpeting loudly, much to his driver's and passenger's alarm. The maverick then began helping each elephant pull its tether out of the ground, after which they all rushed noisily to the highest point of ground in the area. Many from the native population rushed after them in alarm just as the great wave struck.

Anthropological studies of such people as the Kalahari !Kung, Malaysian and Australian Aborigines show strong intuitive capacities traceable even today among the scattered remnants of such societies. The famous explorer, anthropologist and author Laurens van der Post wrote a moving account of a group of !Kung dying of starvation and thirst in the Kalahari desert. Van der Post's guide and driver was a !Kung who had left his ancient ways to team up with van der Post, but his intuitive heart intelligence, an indelible characteristic of the !Kung, remained intact.

One day, having found a clump of desert trees and made camp for the hottest part of the day, the !Kung driver informed Laurens that he heard a group of wandering tribesmen calling for help. "They have had no food or water for days," he told Laurens, "and we must prepare for them." Laurens had heard nothing, but his driver's insistence was unrelenting, so Laurens climbed a small hill nearby and looked in all directions. No one was in sight. "They are getting closer," his driver exclaimed. "There are five of them. Can't you hear them?" Laurens could not, but before long they came into view, five scarecrow survivors, barely alive. "How did you know so far in advance?" Laurens asked. "I heard them," said the driver. "But why couldn't I?" asked Laurens. "Because I heard them from my heart," was the simple reply. And the !Kung are not the only such group to operate with such intuition. Australian Aborigines as well as the Malaysian aboriginals described by the Dutch psychologist Robert Wolff in his book *Original Wisdom* all show striking capacities of this nature, adding up to a voluminous history that is hard to dismiss as simply anecdotal.

Our modern, civilized consciousness has lost direct awareness of the heart-prefrontal dialogue. Certainly, most of the time most of us are unaware of warning signals the heart sends; thus negative events must slap us in the face for cognition and this unbroken state of ignorance keeps us in a constant semi-alert mode against a world we can't trust. We know of aboriginal cultures that are not so cut off from intuitive heart knowing, though in each case their knowing acts selectively, according to the general history of that particular society and its people.

A cosmology referred to as Kashmir Shaivism, perfected before the 10th century, proposed that the primal creative power, which they named Shiva, a male energy in that culture's mythology, dwelt in the centre, or "cave," of the heart. This nonmoving point was the silent witness to a female energy, Shakti, which issued forth from that hypothetical point as waves of energy spinning out and around us. These "wave forms of Shiva" were considered an energy matrix, like a womb containing the potential of all possible universes and creations. Out of this cocoon-like matrix, issuing from our heart and surrounding us in a circular swirl of energy, the creative Shakti spins out worlds for the silent Shiva within to witness. Without the centre, Shiva, there is no Shakti; without Shakti, no Shiva – and we are the field on which this play of consciousness and its strange loops take place.

In the early phase of my Siddha yoga adventure with my Indian meditation teacher Baba Muktananda, he spoke time and again of these wave fields emanating from the heart, surrounding us with love, power and the potential of all conceivable experience. I determined to personally experience that field at all costs: If it is present, I thought, surely we can somehow sense it. Through one evening and on into the night, my meditation focused on that proposed field of wave energy. I put my strength into the "breath of fire" or pranayama, a deep and rapid breathing exercise that over-oxidizes our body and thus, apparently, occasionally alters our ordinary awareness.

After an indeterminable period (seeming hours) of this intense, rapid breathing, everything simply stopped – mind and breath suspended – leaving me in a state of utter simplicity, stillness and clarity. It was then that I experienced, all too briefly, that electromagnetic torus field of the heart engulfing me, much as Muktananda described – as a cocoon of love and universal potential that I then spontaneously termed plasma.

continued on p. 31

Container garden charm

ON THE GARDEN PATH *Carolyn Herriot*

I happily plant in anything that will contain a growing medium – from olive oil cans to old boots – even if it means I have to punch a drainage hole in it first. Container gardening is perfect when you live in a townhouse with a small patio garden or in an apartment with a balcony. You can add interest to your entrance area or some colour outside your window or maybe you would like to grow some organic food, but do not have access to a garden.

You can grow anything in containers: bulbs, winter and summer annuals, perennials, grasses, climbing plants, herbs and veggies. Bamboos provide impressive screens for privacy and containerizing them keeps them from taking over the garden. Experimenting is half the fun.

Try growing salad greens, radishes, green onions, zucchinis, tomatoes, garlic, peas or beans in a planter, window box or oak half-barrel. Many herbs, especially those from the Mediterranean, thrive in hot, dry conditions and are perfect for planters in full sun. In summer, pick fresh sprigs of mint, parsley, chives, oregano or basil from pots outside your door.

I grow bumper crops of cucumbers, peppers, eggplants, basil and tomatoes in large five-gallon containers. For spring colour, plant climbing roses, clematis, honeysuckle and bulbs in cedar boxes on a sundeck; for summer fragrance, plant lavender. Massing colourful planters together is all the rage in gardening circles.

Free-draining soil with adequate drainage is imperative or the soil will dry out, compact and strangle the roots. An adequate level of fertility is needed to feed the plants throughout the season. This can be achieved by incorporating compost or granular organic fertilizer into the mix or liquid feeding on a regular basis. A regular watering routine is important; once the roots fill the containers, they dry out fast.

Screened compost is rich in nutrients and light enough to sustain the healthiest of plant growth for a bumper crop of vegetables. A watering of liquid seaweed from time to time really boosts fruit production and gives plants extra resistance to the stress of being grown in confined conditions.

To keep your planters looking good and to maintain plant health, the most important thing is to top-dress them every year with screened compost, mixed with a balanced, organic fertilizer. Rework planters when they get root-bound or over-crowded. Dig out mature plants and find them a new home in the garden. Refill planters with fresh, screened compost mixed with organic fertilizer and redesign them using exciting, new combinations of plants.

When you come across a new plant you are not sure about, consider growing it in a planter. You can get to know it up close and personal before choosing an appropriate site in the garden. Young shrubs and trees look spectacular grown in terra cotta pots and ceramic planters, grouped together for mass effect.

Container gardening don'ts

Don't use 100 percent garden soil as it sets to concrete when it dries out in a container. Add amendments to create a lightweight, free-draining growing medium and a slow-release fertilizer to feed plants all season long.

Don't site sun lovers in the shade or shade lovers in the sun.

Don't plant your containers so that all the interest happens at the same time. Plan for sustained interest throughout the season. Consider varying heights, colours, textures and bloom time.

Don't think you always have to combine plants. A single specimen with attractive foliage or beautiful flowers can be just as striking as a mass of different plants.

Don't forget to grow edible plants in containers. Patio tomatoes, salad greens, parsley, mints and climbing beans make perfect container specimens.

Don't leave pots that may need extra protection out all winter. Bring them in if necessary. Winter wet with a deep freeze is a killer combination for container plants.

Don't allow plants to become root-bound in their containers. At the first signs of stress, check the roots and, if necessary, move the plants into a larger container.

From A Year on the Garden Path: A 52-Week Organic Gardening Guide *by Carolyn Herriot. Second edition $24.95. Available from your favourite bookstore or order online at www.earthfuture.com/gardenpath.*

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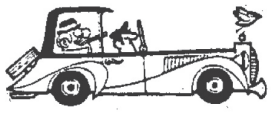

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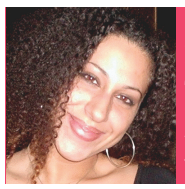

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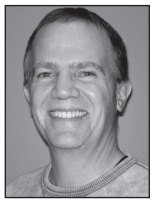

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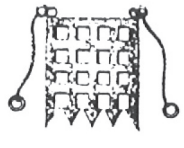

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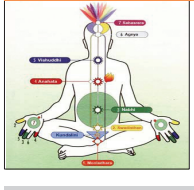

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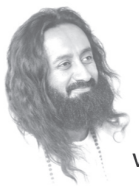

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When I see an adult on a bicycle, I do not despair for the future of the human race.
– H.G. Wells –

Original wisdom cont. from p. 23

At the time, I had no notion what plasma issuing from the heart might exactly mean but have since learned that plasma is a word for the huge "rivers" of electromagnetic energy pouring out of the sun, precisely as they pour out of our heart in miniature torus form. Thus we can see that this creative function within us is a condensation or contraction of a universal process that gives rise to our cosmos. The scientific term for this organization of electromagnetic energy, torus, refers to a structure with a dipole or axis. A significant characteristic of a torus is its holonomic nature: Could any part be isolated (which, of course, is impossible), it would contain the information of the whole. Also significant is that all torus fields interact in hierarchies, so that the information in one field is at some point available to all aspects of the hierarchy.

As I explained in *The Biology of Transcendence*, the first wave form grouping of the heart torus is apparently physical, the second relational-emotional, and the third our universal hookup – our heart's link to the nested hierarchy of electromagnetic fields making up our universe. Again, all torus expressions of this sort are holonomic (any part contains information of the whole). Through our heart, we each are the centre of our universe and we selectively access that infinity as limited and shaped by our personal cognitive system, which is itself shaped by our experience of that which our species, culture, and personal models have selectively drawn and passed on.

Thus the heart would be both the source of the information it processes through the brain and the source of that which it broadcasts to its body and world. As Rudolf Steiner explains, instant by instant the heart registers and reflects back the ongoing events of that world. Without the heart as source there would be no broadcast, and so no content. Without the expression of content, there would be no source. Without that which is created resonating out and reflecting back in, there is no creation. Without creation there is no Me or creator – and around we go, in wondrous cyclic loops.

Excerpted from The Death of Religion and the Rebirth of Spirit *by Joseph Chilton Pearce, copyright 2007, Inner Traditions Bear & Company. www.InnerTraditions.com.*

Chakra Fire, *featured on page 23, by artist Elena Ray.*

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Foot Reflexology Introduction commences certificate weekend course. Intro: $10, Course $295. Pacific Institute of Reflexology, (604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com.

APR 14
Shamanic Drumming & Dreaming Circle: Saturday, 7pm. Insight/healing from your Nature Spirit guardians. Vancouver Multi-Cultural Centre, 1254, W. 7th. By donation. Turtle Island Healing Circles. 604-418-9636. www.drumcircles.ca.

APR 14
Civic Engagement in a Changing World The Dalai Lama Center, Board of Trade and CIAR hosts Robert Putnam (Bowling Alone) 8pm, Chan Centre, $22/$17, www.ticketmaster.ca.

APR 14
Community Potluck/Discussion of "Soulful Relationships." Join us for a fun, inspiring evening exploring love, life and consciousness. Make new connections with like-minded people. $10 advance, $15 on site. 604-731-1783, www.heartsongsolutions.ca.

APR 14, MAY 12
Effective Communication Small Group Workshop. John Morrier RPC teaches practical techniques to communicate empathetically and resolve conflict in relationships. 604-731-9262, john.morrier@telus.net.

APR 18 & 23 & 25
Dru Yoga UK International in Vancouver: Teachers Nan Marshall & Susan Kulas offer classes in two locations. April 18 & 25: West Van United Church 11:30am-1:30pm. Call JoAn, 604-986-8825. April 23: Sukha Yoga, 16th & Arbutus, 7-8:30pm. Call Roma, 604-264-7544. Co-sponsored by *Common Ground*.

APR 20
"Past Life Regression" – Experience a fascinating journey into your past for more understanding of your current life. 535 West 10th Ave. $75. Pre-registration Rifa@lifebetweenlives.ca, 1-888-606-8463.

APR 22
Psychic Reading Fair: 15-20 minute readings. Healings also available. 1-4pm. CDM Psychic Institute, 1114 W. Broadway, Suite 202.
Info: 604-730-8788.

APR 22
Bodytalk Vancouver Community Clinic. Suggested donation $20. Net proceeds to charities. 10am-5pm by appointment: 778-389-7909, info@bodytalkvancouver.com, www.bodytalkvancouver.com. Training: May 27 & Jun 7-10. See ad below.

APR 22
Free concert & book launch: *Darwin, Divinity, and the Dance of the Cosmos* by Bruce Sanguin, 7:30pm, Canadian Memorial United Church and Centre for Peace, 1825 W. 16th Ave. Info: 604-731-3101 www.canadianmemorial.org.

APR 22
Second Annual Interspiritual Gathering to Bless the Salmon: Hadden Park (behind the Maritime Museum), 1:30pm. www.falsecreekwatershed.org or email salmoncelebration@hotmail.com.

APR 25
Free Lecture: The Higher Spiritual Teachings of "The Master Teaching Foundation" titled: "With Love There Is Hope for You, Me and This Planet," 7:30pm, Firehall Library, 1455 West 10th, Van. 604-430-1882.

APR 27-29
"Circle of Justice" ceremonial weekend: Recreate & reinstitute your circle of freedom. Hosted by the Institute of Shamanic Medicine. Info/registration 1-877-329-8668. www.shamanicmedicine.ca. Email info@shamanicmedicine.ca.

APR 27-29 & JUN 30-JUL 1
Family Constellations Workshops, established in Europe, new to Canada. Discover the healing power of the past in your family system. Monthly demos. www.familyconstellations.ca, 604.221.7230.

APR 28
Intuitive Painting with Anita Nairne, artist, teacher, international facilitator. Classes & workshops. Create beautiful paintings from your inner vision. No experience required. Workshop: $110, supplies included. 604-684-6418 or anitanairne@telus.net.

APR 28 & 29
Life Circuits "Tantra - Sacred Sexuality Workshop for Singles & Couples." Improve the condition of your love life. Enhance your awareness and connection to subtle energy. Increase your confidence. For details contact 604-731-1783, www.heartsongsolutions.ca.

APR 29
Kundalini Management: Learn how to co-operate safely with powerful energy currents. Tao Yoga Instructor, Minke de Vos. Sunday, 1-5pm, The Space, #305, 1008 Homer St., $60 prepaid by April 15, 604-669-2505, www.silentground.com.

APR 30
Maya Sacred Path to 2012, Balancing the Masculine and Feminine, Lecture & Slides, Dr. Richard Jelusich, St. James Community Square, 3214 W. 10th, 7:00pm, $25, RSVP, 604-980-0106.

MAY 2
Coding the Earth – Crop Circles, Sacred Sites, Cathedrals and the Coming Human Evolution UK author Freddy Silva at H.R. Macmillan Space Centre 7-9pm $18/$20. Advance reservations: www.invisibletemple.com, local contact John ccss@aebc.com.

MAY 3-4
You've Gotta Have Friends: Discovering the Power of Friends & Belonging. Coast Hotel and Convention Centre, 20392 Fraser Hwy, Langley. 04-533-6546. See ad page 19. Info/register at: www.youvegottahavefriends.ca.

MAY 3-6
Vancouver Marathon May 6; Urban Lifestyle Expo May 3-5 at The Westin, Vancouver. To volunteer, call 604-872-2928 or register online at www.bmovanmarathon.ca.

MAY 6
Touch for Health Muscle Testing: Effortlessly learn to self-test and balance your body's acupuncture meridians. 9am-5pm, $150, Centre for Peace, 16th & Burrard, Janice Golub, 604-220-1992.

MAY 11-16
Answering Creation With Creation, Charting Glenairley in Words and Images with Claire Robson and Pat Brennan. The beauty of Glenairley will be "the university" we never attended. 250-642-3546, www.centreforearthandspirit.org.

MAY 12
Community Potluck/Discussion of "Soulful Relationships." Join us for a fun, inspiring evening exploring love, life and consciousness. Make new connections with like-minded people. $10 advance, $15 on site. 604-731-1783, www.heartsongsolutions.ca.

MAY 12
Life Art: The Essential Mastery of Communication Workshop for Singles & Couples. Improve the condition of your relationships. Set healthy boundaries. Apply the Law Of Attraction. Regenerate your Life. For details contact 604-731-1783, www.heartsongsolutions.ca.

MAY 13
True Nature: Master your Own Upward Spiral. "Power vs. Force" based workshop for Singles & Couples. Acquire powerful spiritual life mastery tools and apply the Law of Attraction for the deliberate creation of the life you want. For details contact 604-731-1783, www.heartsongsolutions.ca.

MAY 18-20
Dr. Vasant Lad Ayurveda Seminar/Fundraiser – Fund-raising evening: Friday, May 18 @ 6pm. Seminar: May 19 & 20; Information & registration: 604-290-8201, www.ayurveda-seminars.com.

MAY 22
Feet Glorious Feet – an insightful presentation with international speaker Chris Stormer for any Body with feet. 6:30-9:30pm in Burnaby. Contact Margo Nielsen at 604-589-3599, www.alwaysb.com.

JUN 25- JUL 1
Divinity Within Spiritual Retreat (Tigh-Na-Mara Resort, Vancouver Island) "The most important relationship you can foster is with your Divine Self." – AnaLaRai, 1-250-752-5117.

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tions for people suffering from chronic pain. Non-religious. Counselors have community crisis line training. Mondays 7pm-11pm, 604-936-5683.

TUESDAYS

Pranic Healing Clinics: Non-touch energy healing. By donation. Tuesdays 11am-3pm and 6pm-9pm. 2950 Laurel St, Vancouver. Closed last Tuesday of month,
www.pranichealing.ca/vancouver.

Reflexology Student Clinic sessions, only $18. Evenings only. By appointment. Pacific Institute of Reflexology. 604-875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com.

Free Tao Te Ching Classes: 7.30-9.30pm. Seeking a path to inner peace? Learn the wisdom of Lao Tzu with renowned Tao Master Lin Liang Meng. English/Mandarin. Email Neelam@sewanti.com, 604-323-1198.

WEDNESDAYS

Meditation & Self-inquiry: Have you lost the balance and rhythm in your life? Let stillness (through self-inquiry) return your wholeness. 5-7pm, 604-317-1613.

THURSDAYS

Pranic Healing Clinic: Non-touch energy healing. By donation. Thursdays 10am-2pm. West Vancouver United Church, 2062 Esquimalt Ave. Closed last Thursday of month.
www.pranichealing.ca/vancouver.

ONGOING

Free Meditation Workshop: Experience Kundalini awakening through Sahaja Yoga, as taught by Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi & enjoy your Powers at our Weekly classes, always free and open to all. 604-597-8440, www.sahajayoga.org.

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APRIL YOGA RETREAT

WOMEN'S YOGA RETREAT with Dorothy Price, Salt Spring Centre of Yoga, beauty, serenity and great food. April 20-22, www.dorothyyoga.com, 866-788-YOGA (9642).

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PERMACULTURE DESIGN COURSE: May 28 - June 9, Winlaw, BC. Learn how-to design & implement ecological & sustainable food producing ecosystems. Kootenay Permaculture Institute (spiralfarm@yahoo.com) 250-226-7302 (www3.telus.net/permaculture).

FASTING RETREAT

REJUVENATE - RENEW – RESTORE: Supervised water/juice fasts April-June: July 1-15/07 at oceanfront Sunshine Coast. A rewarding healing experience! 604-926-3009.

FENG SHUI

FSRC PROFESSIONAL FENG SHUI practitioner training courses: Modules 1&2, May 28-31. Modules 3&4, June 4-7, Nalandabodhi Center, 4610 Earles Street, Vancouver. Call Teresa Hwang, 250-549-1356. Email (fengshui@teresahwang.com) (www.teresahwang.com).

HERBAL MEDICINE

EARTH MAGIC EARTH MEDICINE: Art and science of herbal medicine with Chanchal Cabrera and Sarah Orlowski. 5 weekend workshops. www.earthmagicearthmedicine.com, 1-604-898-1464.

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Dare to relax...At Kw'o:kw'e:hala eco-retreat – Private, earthfriendly, organic, all-inclusive, riverside retreat 1.5 hours from Vancouver. (www.eco-retreat.com) 1-877-eco-retreat.

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TAROT

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YOGA

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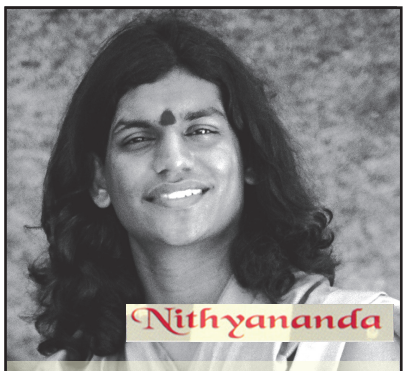

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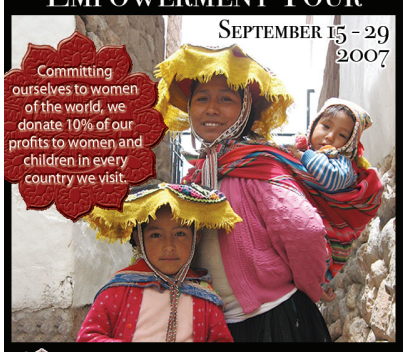

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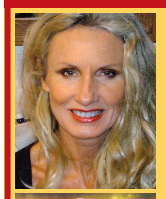

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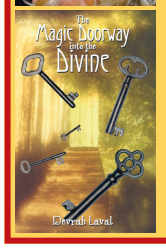

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Monopoly medicine cont. from p. 9

2) The medical mainstream does not respect integrative medicine

Many of us have had the experience of broaching the subject of this herb or that vitamin with our doctors only to be warned that we shouldn't be taking our chances with "untested" therapies. Why do our doctors dis the alternative or non-drug approaches to treating illness? The answer is complex, but one key culprit is undoubtedly the dominance of the pharmaceutical industry in the education of our physicians; the non-patented alternatives rarely get much air-time. Physicians typically learn about new developments in medicine at medical education seminars, dinner meetings and professional conferences, which are still highly dominated by pharmaceutical industry funding. When pharma is funding our doctors' education, which, by its very nature tends to ignore or discredit the non-patented alternatives, should we be surprised that those paying the piper are calling the tune?

3) Integrative medicine is not paid for by public funds, therefore must not be worthy of payment

It's true that if the public pays for something, it is perceived to be valuable, but there are many examples of low-cost, simple therapies that aren't covered by the public purse. While we spend billions more every year on new drugs, even a fraction of that money could fund interventions to get patients eating better, exercising more and even supplying them with important supplements. What about prescribing a shot of lime juice to prevent patients from getting scurvy? This is not a facetious question; some research has suggested that up to a quarter of the US population may be deficient in vitamin C. Why the vitamin shot treatments are still not covered is a mystery, especially in cases where there is clear evidence that a patient is suffering from a proven vitamin deficiency, and that vitamin supplementation may keep people out of hospitals and save them paying for other costly medical treatments.

The one example that infuriates Warren Bell is the use of hyperbaric oxygen in treating deep infections. Putting a patient in a hyperbaric chamber and using oxygen in a pressurized environment can increase oxygen to injured tissues, reduce swelling, improve healing and help fight infection. And there is very good, randomized, controlled evidence that supports the many benefits of hyperbaric oxygen. While it's no "miracle cure," by all accounts, it's very effective. For people with diabetes, who often get ulcers in the lower extremities, which often require amputation, hyperbaric oxygen therapy might be the best thing going. Bizarrely, in BC there are very few hyperbaric chambers and not nearly enough medical use of the ones that do exist. Of those, only MDs can order their use and approve reimbursement for the patient. If you are a naturopath, tough luck. The government won't pay for hyperbaric treatments for your patients.

Why don't we have a health care system that embraces, more thoroughly, the concept of therapeutic efficacy, regardless of whether or not the treatment has a patent? The real problem is not the power of the drug companies, but the power of intellectual property rights (patents), which, Dr. Bell says, effectively "… supplants most other forms of therapy in our country." We're no doubt witnessing a world where pharmaceuticals so eclipse the delivery of healthcare that a vast field of non-prescription remedies go unused.

What's the one thing that integrative medicine practitioners are asking for? A level playing field.

It seems to me that integrative healthcare, as I understand it, is all about taking a central tenet of medicine seriously: "First do no harm." If there are low-cost, low-tech, unpatented solutions for many of our ills, why wouldn't we encourage their use?

Integrative medicine may well require a revolution in thinking. It requires that medical education be more open and accepting, and that a medical profession, even one absolutely sold on the drugs'n'surgery paradigm, understands how something as simple as vitamin therapy could help patients. If alternatives work, put them in the basket along with other forms of medicine.

But be patient because all of this will take time. It took 42 years (and thousands of scurvy deaths) before James Lind's famous experiment was enacted into policy by the British Admiralty.

Alan Cassels is co-author of Selling Sickness *and a drug policy researcher at the University of Victoria. He is also the founder of* Media Doctor Canada*, which evaluates reporting of medical treatments in Canada's media. www.mediadoctor.ca*

Alan presents the talk Promiscuous Medicine *on May 26 (between 10:15-11:15 AM) as part of the Body Heals Conference in Victoria. See display ad on page 3 for more information about the event.*

On Track Zodiac

APRIL 2007 *Adrien Dilon*

ARIES (Mar 21 – Apr 19)
A mustard seed of hope is all you need to carry out your dreams. Believe and make things happen while you have the sun shining in your favour. Aries is an agent of dynamic proportions and the ripple effect of your actions will cause tremendous things to happen.

TAURUS (Apr 20 – May 21)
Will you go on a shopping spree or create a garden of flowers? Only that which gives you immense gratification will matter. Women look into their femininity; men, all things luxurious and pleasurable. Social agreements, high drama or simple amusements play out. Terrific fun!

GEMINI (May 22 – Jun 20)
Sparks may be flying from your fingers as you try to take on too many projects. If you feel mentally overwhelmed, try turning off the TV and radio and tune in to a different frequency. Your system may undergo a metamorphosis, leading you to seek new forms of stimulation.

CANCER (Jun 21 – Jul 22)
While you desire to put your house in order, your inherited tendencies could get the best of you. Secret matters that have been kept secret will be exposed, bringing about a new arrangement for communication. You will need to come clean with your feelings about past events so you can move forward. Break free of guises and adopted beliefs.

LEO (Jul 23 – Aug 22)
Mid-month, you will feel as if the weight of the world is off your shoulders. A planetary forward direction eases your struggle. Renovation and construction are not only for buildings. Anything you desire to preserve or restore is in your power to complete. It is in your hands.

VIRGO (Aug 23 – Sep 22)
To feel a sense of well-being and belonging is of vast importance to you now. You have learned to accept your strengths and weaknesses, bringing you a new level of understanding. You are defining what is important and what you can bring to society or to your circle of influence, at least.

LIBRA (Sep 23 – Oct 22)
If you are filled with the desire to atone, it may be because you need to clear the air with people. Being candid will help you gain the understanding of others. Standing firm, you can move mountains, bringing you a sense of accomplishment. Self-expression on your own terms will set you free.

SCORPIO (Oct 23 – Nov 21)
You are attracted to what challenges you, not what is easy. This is the path of the warrior: To learn and unfold as a conscious being. Relationships will have a definite zing as you, even unconsciously, seek to do more "work" on your character. Lessons come with illuminating force.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22 - Dec 21)
While you may feel emotionally restricted this month, it doesn't appear that way when the gods of beneficial influence take a detour. Take a break yourself, with music or anything that shifts you into a state of exhilaration and allows you to rejoice in who you are right now. You will keep seeking what you need to learn.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22 - Jan 19)
If boredom has come over you like a bad suit, the way through discomfort is to make a change. The desire to get back to nature and calm surroundings may overwhelm you. Your usual reserved personality may want to go even deeper into seclusion. No one tells the lilies to bloom; they do it all by themselves.

AQUARIUS (Jan 20 – Feb 19)
You could be feeling more negativity and doubt as strong Neptunian influences draw you on to a foggy course. You will either feel deluded by your vision or make choices built from strong spiritual convictions. Duality is apparent, but laughter is also the way through your perceptions into paradise.

PISCES (Feb 20 – Mar 20)
Pisces is all about what is "hidden" and you find it easier to carry out your plans in privacy; self-mastery is yours in seclusion. Education will replace an over-indulgence in food and addictions. Plough the seeds and till your imagination to bring what you want into reality. Incredible times are ahead.

Ilona Hedi Granik has recently changed her name to Adrien Dilon. She is a clairvoyant consultant and author with 32 years of experience in astrology, multimedia art and healing, adrien.dilon@gmail.com, www.HeartLightCentre.com.

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